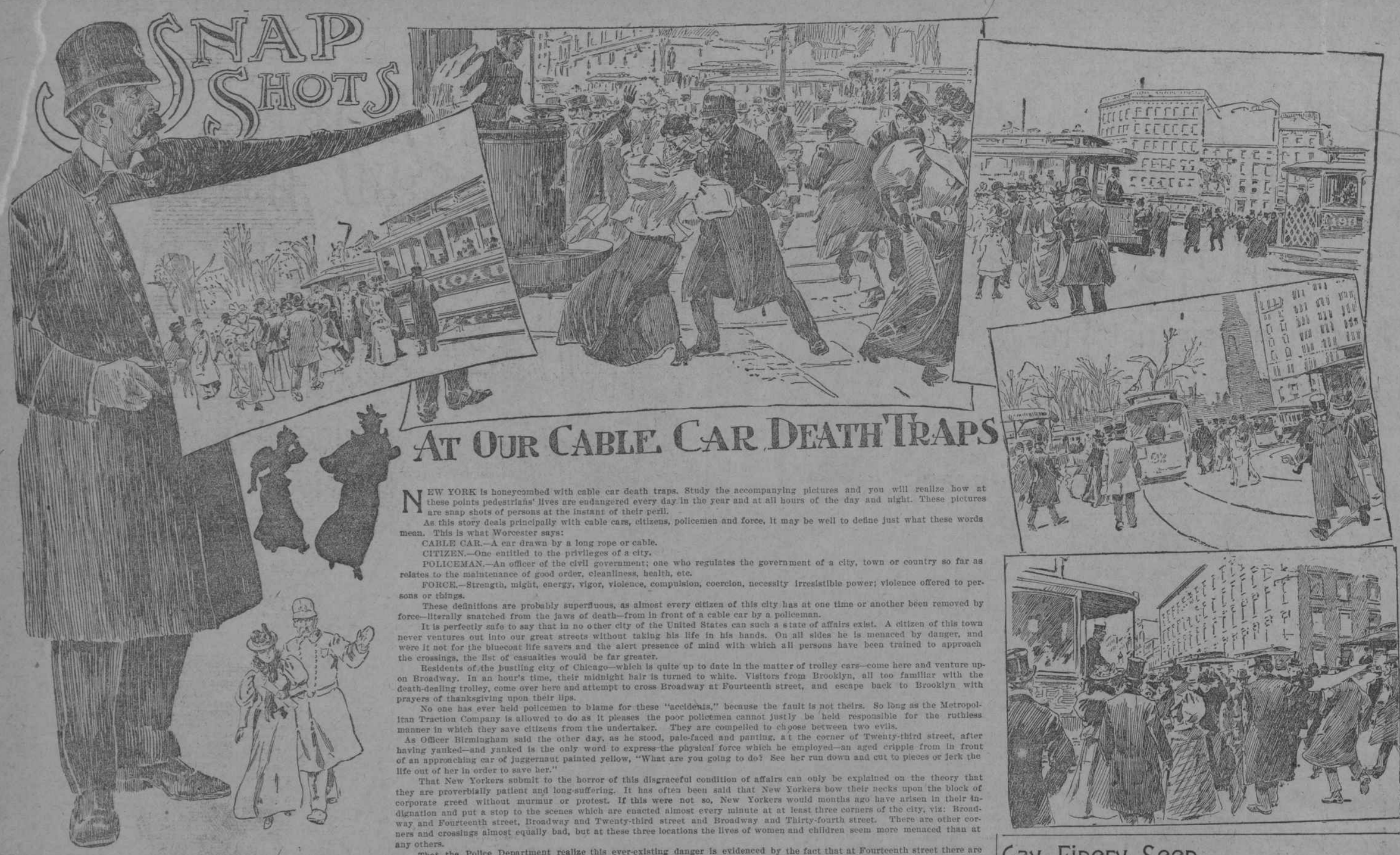

AT OUR CABLE CAR DEATH TRAPS

NEW YORK is honeycombed with cable car death traps. Study the accompanying pictures and you will realize how at these points pedestrians' lives are endangered every day in the year and at all hours of the day and night. These pictures are snap shots of persons at the instant of their peril.

As this story deals principally with cable cars, citizens, policemen and force, it may be well to define just what these words mean. This is what Worcester says:

CABLE CAR.—A car drawn by a long rope or cable.

CITIZEN.—One entitled to the privileges of a city.

POLICEMAN.—An officer of the civil government; one who regulates the government of a city, town or country so far as relates to the maintenance of good order, cleanliness, health, etc.

FORCE.—Strength, might, energy, vigor, violence, compulsion, coercion, necessity irresistible power; violence offered to persons or things.

These definitions are probably superfluous, as almost every citizen of this city has at one time or another been removed by force—literally snatched from the jaws of death—from in front of a cable car by a policeman.

It is perfectly safe to say that in no other city of the United States can such a state of affairs exist. A citizen of this town never ventures out into our great streets without taking his life in his hands. On all sides he is menaced by danger, and were it not for the bluecoat life savers and the alert presence of mind with which all persons have been trained to approach the crossings, the list of casualties would be far greater.

Residents of the bustling city of Chicago—which is quite up to date in the matter of trolley cars—come here and venture upon Broadway. In an hour's time, their midnight hair is turned to white. Visitors from Brooklyn, all too familiar with the death-dealing trolley, come over here and attempt to cross Broadway at Fourteenth street, and escape back to Brooklyn with prayers of thanksgiving upon their lips.

No one has ever held policemen to blame for these "accidents," because the fault is not theirs. So long as the Metropolitan Traction Company is allowed to do as it pleases the poor policemen cannot justly be held responsible for the ruthless manner in which they save citizens from the undertaker. They are compelled to choose between two evils.

As Officer Birmingham said the other day, as he stood, pale-faced and panting, at the corner of Twenty-third street, after having yanked—and yanked is the only word to express the physical force which he employed—an aged cripple from in front of an approaching car of juggernaut painted yellow, "What are you going to do? See her run down and cut to pieces or jerk the life out of her in order to save her."

That New Yorkers submit to the horror of this disgraceful condition of affairs can only be explained on the theory that they are proverbially patient and long-suffering. It has often been said that New Yorkers bow their necks upon the block of corporate greed without murmur or protest. If this were not so, New Yorkers would months ago have arisen in their indignation and put a stop to the scenes which are enacted almost every minute at at least three corners of the city, viz: Broadway and Fourteenth street, Broadway and Twenty-third street and Broadway and Thirty-fourth street. There are other corners and crossings almost equally bad, but at these three locations the lives of women and children seem more menaced than at any others.

That the Police Department realize this ever-existing danger is evidenced by the fact that at Fourteenth street there are stationed in the daytime three policemen; at Twenty-third street, five policemen, and at Thirty-fourth street two policemen; and that the Metropolitan Traction Company is alive to the responsibility of its recklessness is shown by the presence at each of these places of employees, whose ostensible duties are to wave flags and watch cable mishaps, but whose real functions are to violently pull people across the street, thus saving the company the expense of damage suits and the payment of judgments.

The officers of the Traction Company will probably tell you, if you ask them, that these dangers cannot be avoided. They will insist that they take every possible precaution to prevent the killing of pedestrians. They will add, with a great show of plausibility, that it is absolutely necessary that the cable cars shall swing around the Fourteenth street curve at the speed of an eagle in its flight. And the employe whom you question will very likely try to convince you that it is the citizen's duty to look out for the cars rather than the duty of the company to look out for the citizen.

This is a question which need not be discussed, for the fact remains, that the Broadway Cable Company, which is perhaps no worse than the other companies, seems not to recognize in any degree the rights of pedestrians at the crossings and curves. Excuses and justifications the officials can make and deliver in gross packages, but they cannot get away from the fact that as their cars dash down Broadway and cross Twenty-third street, and stop with a sudden jar when they have passed the southern crosswalk, it requires the presence of various quick, active and cool-headed policemen to avert casualties.

For the past few months the five officers stationed at this point have been Policemen Birmingham, Meyers, Priel, Davis and Slotman. There is not one of these five but who welcomes the hour of his relief from duty. From the moment they take their post until their release comes their nerves are constantly undergoing a terrible strain. They must be ever wide awake and argus-eyed. They must be able to see beside, before and behind. They must note the efforts of the timid to reach the opposite side of the street. They must anticipate the confusion of the frightened pedestrian at the critical instant. Their arms must be ever ready to snatch from death the man, woman or child who stands, terror-stricken in the pathway of a rapidly approaching car, unable to save themselves from the onrushing, clanging monster.

Not an hour passes but that each of these policemen reaches out his brawny arm and dexterously drags some one from death. What is true of the policemen is also true of the semi-uniformed employes of the cable company, who stand at this and other crossings, and so accustomed have the gripmen become to these narrow escapes that they seldom, if ever, turn their heads, but dash merrily on, clanging their bells. Every trip down town or up has become a career of hit or miss, and the miss is usually by a hair's breadth.

Twenty-third street is probably the worst crossing in the city. No person who doesn't posses rare presence of mind and coolness of judgment can gain any of the opposite sidewalks except he wade through perils which could exist in no community on earth other than this.

Try to cross Broadway on the south side of Twenty-third street. You no more than escape the cars going either up or down Broadway than than you run into a Lexington avenue car proceeding in one direction or the other. In your mad flight to avoid this danger you more likely than not run into a truck or hack, or some other four-wheeled vehicle. If a policeman grasps you by the arm or by the neck and yanks you into safety, the chances are you are whirled against the wheels of a delivery wagon.

Things are almost as bad at the immediate junction of Fifth avenue and Twenty-third street, for there the cable cars dash uptown at full speed, while the downtown cars, after having halted at the entrance to the Fifth avenue Hotel, start off with a rush and a plunge, as if to avoid any one who would ride on that particular car. Nor is the speed slackened until the car comes to a halt with a mighty jar beside the gridiron building on the southwest corner.

Policeman Birmingham was very frank in discussing the condition of affairs. "It's the divil's own work," he said to a Journal reporter, "and a man occupyin' th' position as I occupies needs tin thousan' hand and tin million eyes, wid de heart of a lion and de patience of a Job. Many's de time as I've yanked a female from in front of a yellar dashboard, wid a big number painted on it, an' a-had her a-faintin' and a-weepin' in me arms. Bless their souls, but they do get rattled in a-crossin' this street, an' you can't blame 'em. The way them cars do slide across these walks is a caution, an' yet what yer goin' t' do about it? Yer can't do nothin', except keep yer eyes open and trust to the Lord that looks after th' lambs."

On the afternoon of Wednesday last, from 3:30 to 4:10 o'clock, the reporter saw not less than fourteen people dragged from in front of moving cars. In performing this duty the policemen could not be gentle. That was impossible; they had to act quickly, and they did so, with the result that one old lady was dragged across the tracks with such force that she fell to her knees and her gown was torn by her fall.

A little child was grasped just in time to prevent being run down by a car, only to be saved the next instant from being run over by a truck by the desperate and fortunately successful efforts of a truckman, who reined in his horses in the nick of time. All this was at Twenty-third street.

While, perhaps, better precautions are taken at Fourteenth street, yet the same state of affairs seems to exist there on the curve. There is not so much danger from cars bound uptown as from those bound downtown. This is because the former invariably halt before the crossing is reached and policemen and pedestrians alike have an opportunity of seeing the car standing there ready to proceed.

But with the downtown cars it is nothing short of a miracle that human life is not sacrificed daily, or it may not be too much to say, sacrificed hourly. The curve begins at the north, at a point opposite Tiffany's, and the gripmen, obeying orders, put on full speed, so that the cars whirl around the curve, jolting the breath from passengers and threatening death to all who may be in their track.

Officer Barclay, one of the three policemen stationed at this point, claims that he rescues on an average at least two scores of persons during his hours of duty. If this is true of Officer Barclay, it is probably true of his two associates, and, if so, no less than one hundred and twenty persons are rescued every day.

At Thirty-fourth street matters are not quite so bad, although they are nearly so. The presence of two lines of horse cars, which, as they approach, hide the coming of cable cars, necessitates the utmost vigilance on the part of policemen, cable company employes—of whom there are four—and pedestrians alike. The number of daily escapes at this point, however, is considerably less than at Fourteenth street or Twenty-third street.

Must the Venerable High Hat Go?

"This is the hat me father wore!"
—Old Song—

Lord Ronald Gower, a peer of England, has solemnly written letters to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, imploring them to discard the silk hat.

"It is the ugliest and most unhealthy headgear of the century," he wrote, adding that if the Princes discarded them, "our classes are intensely snobbish," and would follow the fashion adopted by a Prince of the blood."

Many years ago the Prince of Wales received a similar appeal, and, being a very good natured young man, promptly laid his silk hat aside and wore a queer looking, three cornered affair that was neither convenient nor graceful. Thereupon, after one week of it, His Highness backslided, and has been wearing a silk hat ever since.

Unfortunately, Lord Gower made no suggestions for a hat to take the place of the silk hat. And there's the rub. A silk hat is expensive. It is clumsy. When you jump up from your seat in a car you usually smash it against something. If it gets wet it is ruined. It rarely retains its smooth surface more than three or four days, and ironing takes time and money. But what can take its place?

The Sunday Journal has consulted the leading hat makers in this town upon the subject, and, finding most of them at a loss to suggest an appropriate substitute, has gone to the milliners for ideas.

Milliners, as a rule, are more fertile in ideas and schemes for head wear than hatters; therefore, why should they not design a substitute for the stovepipe?

Dunlap, the hatter, said:

"It would be impossible for a society man to discard the silk hat. It is a necessary adjunct to the Prince Albert coat. We would be at a loss to know how to make a substitute for the silk hat. It is a healthful hat, being well ventilated, and is anything but ugly in appearance. If the Prince of Wales does discard the silk hat I suppose we will make up a few hats exactly like the one he adopts."

Mr. Knox, the hatter, said:

"I doubt if the Prince of Wales can be persuaded to give up the silk hat. Fashion demands it. About forty years ago Melton, the old London hatter, induced the Prince of Wales to give up the silk hat. As a substitute he made for him a three-cornered chapeau, but the Prince only wore this odd hat for a very brief time. Since then he has been devoted to the silk hat. If he does wear another style of hat for dress occasions, I am not much inclined to think that American men will copy him. The silk hat is selling better, at present, than ever before. It would be almost impossible to find a satisfactory substitute for it."

Young, the hatter, said:

"The rumor that the Prince of Wales is about to discard the silk hat has reached New York. The sales of the past week prove that many of the fashionable men about town are ready to do as the Prince does. As a substitute for the silk hat we are already selling the Alpine. It is more convenient to handle, if not quite so dignified in appearance. It is the conventional Alpine, only that it comes in lighter shades, and a new wrinkle is shown in the creasing of the crown; not only it is crested in the centre, but at the sides. In weight it is much lighter than the English silk hat. In color these new Alpines are either pearl gray or otter, worn with a black or light-colored silk band."

Rothschild, the milliner, said:

"If men are to give up the silk hat for dress occasions we will be glad to welcome them as customers. I am sure that they will be very easy to please and quick to decide what they want. Something in the way of a modified Gainsborough hat would be what we would offer them as a substitute for the silk hat. It would be a picturesque hat with a pointed crown and a flaring Gainsborough brim. It could be made of velvet or rich silk, and we would trim it with feathers. As to the coloring, that would have to vary with each man's individual style and complexion. We would make every effort to have his hat becoming, and have no doubt but that in time he would become as fond of his gay headgear as he is now of his silk hat. The public would soon become accustomed to it also. Think how readily they accustomed themselves to the sight of the bloomer girl. The size of the hat would be no drawback to its success. Custom demands that a man remove his hat at the theatre."

Jacquin, the milliner, said:

"There is no doubt that something more picturesque than the silk hat could be designed for men for dress occasions. To my mind the hat which the greatest number of men would be apt to find most becoming would be a three-cornered hat much like a Napoleon hat in shape. It could be made of velvet, silk or cloth and trimmed with ostrich feathers and a fancy buckle."

Mme. Burdette, a Fifth avenue milliner, said: "The hat we would make as a substitute for the silk hat would depend largely on the style and bearing of our customer. One of the most appropriate hats for men which we have in stock is the walking hat shape. The newest have a bell crown, something like last season's silk hat, which might appeal to the men. To make the hat picturesque we would trim it with one of the fashionable Paradise plumes. With rosettes of satin and this plume waving over the side of the hat, the effect would be very good. There is no doubt that young dudes might become partial to the jaunty Napoleon hat if it were trimmed to blend correctly with their complexions."

Mme. Lillias Hurd, one of the prominent Fifth avenue milliners, said: "If the men will give up the dress suit with the silk hat, and adopt knickerbockers and the picturesque satin waistcoat with its lace frills, then there will be any number of becoming hats we can make for them.

"For dashing young men there would be the Gainsborough, trimmed with long plumes. We would make it of some soft material like silk, velvet or plush, in preference to straw, and bend the flaring brim to suit each man's individual style. We might add a rosette or two or a jewelled buckle. Then, for the men who might be a little timid about appearing in a hat as large as the Gainsborough there would be the jaunty three-cornered Continental hat. But the men who are contemplating discarding the silk hat must remember that they will have to pay well for their new headgear. Picturesqueness costs money, and ostrich plumes are not had for the asking. The hat we would make for them for $8 they would never think of wearing. Their Spring millinery bills would easily amount to $75, and that would only include two hats, one for ordinary wear and the other for dress occasions. In addition to the cost of their hats they would be forced to let their hair grow a trifle longer than is their usual custom if they would look their best, for close shaven hair and a Gainsborough hat are somewhat out of harmony.

"We Must Discard the Silk Hat," Says Lord Gower.

Gay Finery Seen in the Paris Shops.

Paris, April 10.—There is such a world of finery to choose from this season that even the Parisian, blase from looking at pretty things, becomes almost enthusiastic.

To tell of it all—well, one hardly knows where to begin. The sensation preceding the effort is ever so much like one feels as she stands in the Eiffel Tower, surveying lovely Paris, and wondering which of its beauties she shall see first. Still, all things must have a beginning. Even the world itself had to.

Elbow capes are worn by young and old. The short variety capes seemed to have been fashioned by the thousands, but of such divers materials that one doesn't feel a depressing amount of sameness. I saw a cape of black satin entirely covered with Renaissance lace, with the pattern of the lace so arranged as to form a border. Around the edge was a full frill of black chiffon over a frill of deep cream lace. The tour-de-cou was a tall ruff of black chiffon, finished with a narrow cream lace edging, and all the back was a bow of broad cerise satin ribbon.

One of the waists was of shot apricot silk. The long yoke was formed of points of old English lace, put on strait across, and touching at the points where the waist fastened at the front.

Between the points were full choux of reseda mousseline de sole. Bordering the yoke was a fold of the reseda mousseline de sole held in place with little cameo pins, and at the shoulder it was allowed to flare in the shape of butterfly wings. The waist was slightly pointed, back and front, and was finished with a twist of green silk. The green silk was used to face the diminishing plait at the front of the bodice, and the high straight collar was of the same. The sleeves of the apricot silk were the usual full elbow sleeves, with the fullness falling well away from the shoulder.

A New York belle, who has been wintering on the Mediterranean, was pointed out to me. She is just stopping in Paris long enough to have a very complete summer outfit fashioned here. Then she goes on to Newport for a gay season. Her gown was of palest citron silk, with a design in yellow roses, very delicate in color. The skirt was godet, not very full, with all the godets at the back. The bodice was of the green silk with a yoke of pale yellow, covered with black chiffon. Around the yoke was draped a fichu of the soft pale yellow silk edged with a frill of the black chiffon. With this costume she wore long black suede gloves that reached to the full puff of the sleeve. The hat was green and cream straw cleaned trimmed profusely with violets.

It is seldom that one sees anything new in the art of trimming on the back of bodices. A silk dress I saw at one of the shops the other day made quite an impression on me because there was something so delightfully new in the way the bodice was fashioned at the back. There was but a single seam, and that at the back of the bodice.

Where the two fulled pieces coming from the under arm seams met there was just a suggestion of a shirred heading where the seams came together. As the seam neared the waist line the fullness increased and was laid in slanting plaits and drawn very tight to give the effect of a corset. The front of this bodice was blouse, with a full cascade of chiffon, and at the waist the material was laid in little plaits to give the same corset effect as the back.

One of the most popular waists is a cameo silk with a prevailing tone of soft yellow. The blouse front was draped over to the left side and fastened with two big brass buttons, which gleamed out through a cascade of deep cream lace. The high crush collar and the girdle were of crushed burnt-orange, velvet, and topping the collar was a full ruff of cream chiffon. The sleeves were very full, and were finished with a "rolled-up" effect that showed a facing of plain yellow silk. Great choux of wide yellow lace fell at the outside seams of the sleeves. Quantities of tulle and chiffon are used on everything. All the short spring capes are literally covered with gauzy materials. And the hats are piled high with tulle of all colors, generally a bunch of green and white tucked in among the flowers.

Mrs. Ritchie, of California, well known as the very wealthy Miss Roach, of Cincinnati, creates a sensation with her gowns on account of their originality. A Paris designer gave me a glimpse of something new, which she said had been ordered by Mrs. Ritchie. It was a "blazer" of black velvet. This term gives no idea of the elegance of the little coat, but it describes the cut. The back and sides were tight-fitting and bordered with jet. The front flared to show a lining of white corded silk, and the vest was a brilliant white silk studded with gold. It was the most modish, the most delightfully chic little garment in the way of a spring wrap that I have seen.

Miss Pullman, of Chicago, has been having a trousseau prepared here which in a quiet way attracted a great deal of attention. None of her gowns is showy or elaborate. They are, I might say, models of propriety. I saw such a lovely gown in a lavender shade that suggested mauve to me in an unaccountable way! The skirt was very large around, as so many skirts are, and was untrimmed except by a double ruching of the lavender satin around the hem. This ruching caused the skirt to flare around the feet. It was walking length, and had a very elegant appearance. It fitted the hips as though moulded upon them.

The waist fitted like a glove. The bodice met the skirt with a folded belt of lavender chiffon made quite full and fluffy. Down the front of the bodice came another fold of the chiffon, and the sleeves were fully puffed, with the chiffon over the satin. There was not a particle of relief in any way about the gown from its lavender hue except in the lining of the skirt, which was a brilliant orange. This lining rarely shows, but when it does, what an impression of underneath elegance it gives!

Another of the gowns which hung among those marked with Miss Pullman's name was a deep green. It had a skirt of walking length. The skirt is full and looped in a curious way over another skirt of the same color. It suggested an overskirt to me, yet was more graceful. It had a little jacket of a contrasting color belted with one of those narrow bands you see clasping a woman's waist. A model English travelling suit this, and becoming to those who are willing to experiment with their modistes in the hope of something pretty and original.

NINA GOODWIN.

BATISTE HANDKERCHIEFS.

They Are the Very Newest Fad, and the Ultra Fashionable Should Never Be Without Them.

The newest handkerchief is of linon batiste. It is in the natural linen color and was designed specially to be carried with the batiste gowns. Many varieties of these handkerchiefs are shown. Some have a scalloped border, embroidered in white, and others are made with a narrow insertion of white drawn work. These handkerchiefs can be bought for twenty-five cents apiece.